



newsletter

Three little birds so cool are we..



...full to the brim with mice for tea.

With apologies to W.S. Gilbert

Photo by Martin Field

The kestrels had their photocall on 7 July and have joined the Institute's pest control division.

Mad dogs and croquet players

A thermometer placed on one of the corner pegs on Sunday August 10 registered 105°F. Is this a record? It was 90°F in the shade and 110°F inside the hut.

What's on and when

- Aug 23-25 Wrest Park Crafts Festival
- Sept 3 WI group (all lawns, 4pm onwards)
- Sept 13-14 Handicap tournament
- Sept 27 EACF League playoff at Wrest Park

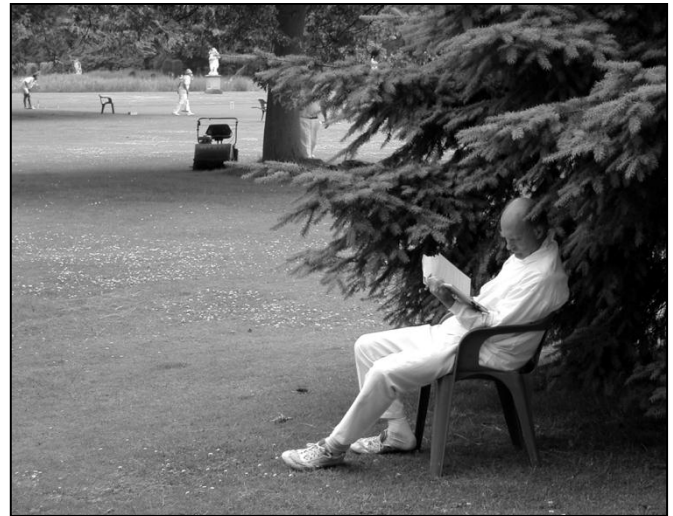
Advanced tournament 4-6 July

Report by Howard Bottomley with photos by Jon Watson

For the first time at Wrest Park we were entertained by lunchtime mowing. A lower entry allowed this luxury and gave us more consistent lawns, even if the grass still grew quicker than we could play. Mike Percival's alarm (for the hard of hearing) was particularly useful at waking everyone.

Eric Audsley's laptop managed and was very strict too. Ben Ashwell must be thanked for his attempts to master the machine in Eric's absence on Saturday. Human intervention was allowed later to impose finish times at 1:00pm and 4:30pm which worked well.

"Ian (Parkinson) likes beer" is a phrase we heard after the first ever tournament barrel of beer had been secreted, cooled, tested by the committee and made available from the small hut. The baby kestrels rattled when their parents returned with tea, with special viewing arranged through the George Woolhouse telescope.



Jerry Guest waits for his next game

Ben Ashwell managed to lose an enthralling one-ball to Richard Smith believing his several hoop lead enough. It must have been Richard's generous application of sun cream that helped.

We lost a few players as the week-end progressed. First Quiller Barrett got queasy and then Jerry Guest negotiated leave. Jerry must know something about computers!

John Leader was particularly pleased by one game saying 'I didn't miss a hoop'. He was right, he had been 26'd, and eventually became the lucky recipient of the golden bananas.



John Leader does his Winston Churchill impersonation

A loo drill was effected by English Heritage to ensure we were all pleasant and correct.

We also discovered that Bill Sidebottom has Royal connections, being a corgi tum tickler – sounds like a folk group to me! Linslade golf croquet helpers a'plenty turned out lunch after lunch and there was a faint trace of the jazz concert from the Orangery.

Colin McKenzie and Nigel Polhill collected prizes for achievements few knew were advertised. Our tournament winner, Jon Watson, enjoyed two triple peels and his game with Duncan Hector, commented: "the game between Howard Bottomley and Rod Ashwell has allowed time for a spider's web to be spun in hoop one".



Jon Watson receives the trophy from Eric Audsley

Match results

Longman Cup vs Colchester (away)

6 July

Lost 2-5

Wrest Park	Colchester	WP score
Geoff Strutt (4)	Ron Selmes (5)	-10
Elaine Newman (20)	Margaret Selmes (14)	
Bryan Harral (4)	Paul Strover (5)	+11
Peter Newman (12)	George Winder (6)	-8
Geoff Strutt (4)	Paul Strover (5)	-19
Bryan Harral (4)	Ron Selmes (5)	+14
Peter Newman (12)	Margaret Selmes (14)	-13
Elaine Newman (20)	George Winder (6)	-5

The team travelled hopefully, but were undone by a strong Colchester team. Bryan's resurgence continues - more of this and he will be ineligible next year.

Mary Rose vs Pendle (home)

19 July

Won 5-2

Wrest Park	Pendle	WP score
Ben Ashwell (1)	David Barrett (2)	+14
George Collin (2½)	John Beech (3½)	
John Bevington (3)	Norman Hicks (3½)	-5
Bryan Harral (4)	Robert Essler (4½)	+1
Ben Ashwell (1)	David Barrett (2)	-5
George Collin (2½)	John Beech (3½)	+14
John Bevington (3)	Robert Essler (4½)	+7
Bryan Harral (4)	Norman Hicks (3½)	+11

We had home advantage courtesy of Howard's having chosen the the oddness or evenness of the Lottery bonus ball correctly. Pendle travelled down the night before and staying at Northampton courtesy of Norman Hicks (one of Pendle's founder members).

John lost because he decided to persist with a penult peel when one failure should have been deterrent enough, and Bryan won because Robert failed to hit the peg in time.

Howard provided lunch, and after George's win John sealed it by beating Robert (a reversal of their only previous meeting in the 1996 All England final). Ben lost to David's steady play but Bryan came through again, so it's back to Cheltenham on August 3.

Beds & Herts League vs Colworth (away)

27 July

Lost 1-3

Wrest Park	Colworth	WP score
Bryan Harral (4)	Steve Jones (8)	-4T
Peter Newman (12)	Trevor Wilkins (9)	
Elaine Newman (12)	Laurie Aspinall (12)	-11
Peter Newman (12)	Trevor Wilkins (9)	-12T
Elaine Newman (20)	Laurie Aspinall (12)	
Bryan Harral (4)	Steve Jones (8)	+1

Mary Rose vs Cheltenham (away)

3 August

Lost 3-4

Wrest Park	Cheltenham	WP score
Ben Ashwell (1)	Jamie Burch (½)	-3
George Collin (2½)	Michael Rangeley (1½)	
John Bevington (3)	Paul Hands (1½)	-16
Bryan Harral (4)	Roger Jackman (2)	+1
Ben Ashwell (1)	Jamie Burch (½)	+13
George Collin (2½)	Michael Rangeley (1½)	-14
John Bevington (3)	Roger Jackman (2)	-8
Bryan Harral (4)	Paul Hands (1½)	+24

A long hot day saw our efforts to retain the trophy fail at about 8 o'clock when Roger Jackman finally pegged out to win the deciding game. The highlights included the reappearance of Paul Hands, inventor of the Egyptian system of tournament management, and Bryan's excellent form which brought him two wins and 29 well-deserved index points. Ben's singles win included a straight triple attempt, and his handicap is now down to ½. The doubles finished with an anti-climax when, with Michael pegged out and Jamie for peg, George retired to partner on the north boundary after an attempt at rover and in doing so conceded a wiring lift!

Inter Club vs Surbiton (away)

7 August

Lost 1-4

Wrest Park	Surbiton	WP score
Howard Bottomley	Stephen Mulliner	-25
Rod Ashwell	George Noble	+7
Ben Ashwell	Jerry Guest	-13
Rod Ashwell	Jerry Guest	-7
Ben Ashwell	George Noble	-7

Howard had made any number of attempts to arrange this match but was continually frustrated by Surbiton's inability to raise a team, which, given the resources at their disposal, is somewhat suprising if not downright suspicious. The match eventually took place on a Thursday afternoon and evening between teams of three and our sole success was Rod's win against George Noble. Both teams then repaired to a local Greek restaurant, where Stephen Mulliner was good enough to pay the bill.

Beds & Herts League vs Meldreth (away)
10 August **Drew 2-2**

Wrest Park	Meldreth	WP score
Ben Marchant (18)	Robert Skeen (10)	-1T
Elaine Newman (22 D20)	Bob Brashaw (14)	
Peter Newman (12)	Alec Osborne (12)	+1T
Peter Newman (12)	Robert Skeen (10)	+7T
Elaine Newman (22 D20)	Alec Osborne (12)	
Ben Marchant (18)	Robert Skeen (10)	-3T

Report by Peter Newman

On a day when temperatures were the highest on record we enjoyed Meldreth's hospitality on their lawn behind the British Queen. The western half of the lawn, in full sun, was baked hard, fast and a little bumpy. The eastern half, shaded by trees in the morning, was lush and still holding the dew, which stopped the balls in their tracks. It was not a day for long breaks - no-one really had the measure of conditions for more than a few shots. However, we kept our patience through long periods of Aunt Emma-ish play and Elaine and Ben took a one hoop lead just before time. They failed to split up the opponents and Robert and Bob scored the equalising hoop in their final turn, going on to make the vital point. Peter came back from being behind most of the game to make the winning hoop in the last turn.

We were joined on the lawn for the afternoon game by some local chickens. Ben played a strong game but Robert held on to win by 3. Elaine repeated her morning feat of peeling her supposedly stronger partner through a hoop, and the Newmans came through +7 on time.

Beds & Herts League vs St Albans (away)
16 August **Won 3-1**

Wrest Park	St Albans	WP score
George Collin (2½)	Richard Smith (½)	+16T
David Woolley (7)	David Kitson (8)	
George Collin (2½)	Richard Smith (½)	+9T
John Bevington (3)	Terry Mahoney (3½)	
John Bevington (3)	Terry Mahoney (3½)	+12
David Woolley (7)	David Kitson (8)	-4T

Although recently watered the lawn at St Albans was still quite fast, and this, together with the gentle slope, made some hoop approaches definitely tricky. Poor Richard Smith must have had at least four attempts to take position at 1-back in the afternoon doubles but fell short or over-rolled each time, and this after Terry had raced round to penultimate without breaking sweat.

Eastern Championship 2003

DB Maugham bt AK Gregory +14tp +26tp
 P Cordingley bt IG Vincent +26 +16
 RK White bt R Beijderwellen +16 +12
 KMH Aiton bt PW Thompson w/o
 RJ Brown bt JG Allen -13otp +8tp +6
 R Ashwell bt AC Davies +5 +20
 JC Williams bt B Ashwell +19 +16
 JB Gibbons bt D Mundy +5 +2

Quarter-Finals

DB Maugham bt P Cordingley +25tp +5tp
 KMH Aiton bt RK White +12tpo -9 +6tp

RJ Brown bt R Ashwell +26tp +15
 JB Gibbons bt JC Williams +17tp +16



Winner John Gibbons in play during the final. Photo by John Wheeler.

Semi-Finals

DB Maugham bt KMH Aiton -17tp -26tp +26tp +17tp
 +26tp
 JB Gibbons bt RJ Brown +17 +26 -26tp -26tp +17

Final

JB Gibbons bt DB Maugham +26tp +12tp +15tp

Plate final

RJ Brown bt RK White +17 +26tp

Over half the games in the main event featured triple peels - class play by any standards. Winner John Gibbons must like Wrest Park as he won the All England Handicap final held here in 1998.

Toilet training

The loos near the Orangery are maintained by English Heritage and are inspected before the park opens and cleaned after it shuts. We have a key which allows us use of the facilities out of hours, typically before opening time and after closing time at weekends when there is a tournament in progress. EH, with good reason, do not like opening the doors in the morning to find things rather less spotless than they left them the night before. Brushes are provided. Please use them.

Signing in guests

Members can invite guests provided they enter their names in the visitors book and extract the £3.50 green fee. I would be grateful if group members who receive the newsletter could tell those who do not, as it would appear that people are either unaware of the procedure or are wilfully ignoring it. The visitor's book is an A5 sized diary which lives near the red letter trays.

John Bevington

19 August 2003